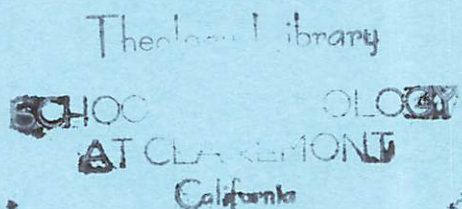


*WATERworks Press*  
*8035 13th Street*  
*Silver Spring, MD 20910 USA*  
*301/589-2509, 301/589-3150*



Additional copies of "Miriam's Sisters Rejoice" are available from:  
WATERworks Press, 8035 13th Street, Silver Spring, MD 20910, USA, 301-589-2509.

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5 cassettes (6 hrs., 40 min.) in vinyl album.  
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## **MIRIAM'S SISTERS REJOICE**

### *Preface*

"Miriam's Sisters Rejoice" is a resource which includes the text for telling the story of Passover from a feminist perspective. Each spring\* throughout the world Jews gather with family and community to observe the ritual of Passover and Christians come together for the celebration of Easter.

We at WATER, the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual, use this traditional time of ritualizing the renewal of life as the occasion for bringing Jewish and Christian women, children and men together for a seder celebration.

Why is this *haggadah* (ha-ga'-da, the script of the *Seder*) different from any other *haggadah*? This one is different primarily because it is a collaborative effort of Jewish and Christian women, and when it is used it will bring Jewish and Christian feminists together to tell the story of women's journey from oppression to liberation.

This is the second such *haggadah* produced by WATER. The first, A Seder of the Sisters of Sarah, by Diann Neu and Ronnie Levin, was very popular. For those of you who use it and enjoy it, we are certain that Miriam's Sisters Rejoice will be equally festive and faith centered. Now women and men who seek to tell the story of the journey to freedom have choices for their celebration. Use these *Seders* for years to come!

WATER offers this resource to enliven feminist liturgical celebrations, to invite groups to reclaim liturgies and symbols from women's perspectives, and to encourage churches and synagogues to incorporate feminist perspectives into worship.

It is our hope and prayer that this *haggadah* may enhance our celebration of Passover (*Pesach*) and Easter. May it strengthen our commitment to work together as feminists of faith.

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\* In the southern hemisphere it is autumn when it is spring in the northern hemisphere. Jews in the south celebrate Passover as a spring festival in common with their communities in Israel.



## About Food

The holiday of Passover calls for the eating of special foods. The basis of this tradition is that we do not eat foods that rise or swell as leaven makes bread rise.\* We avoid such foods to re-enact the conditions of the Exodus from Egypt when Jewish women had to bake matzah because there was no time to bake bread.

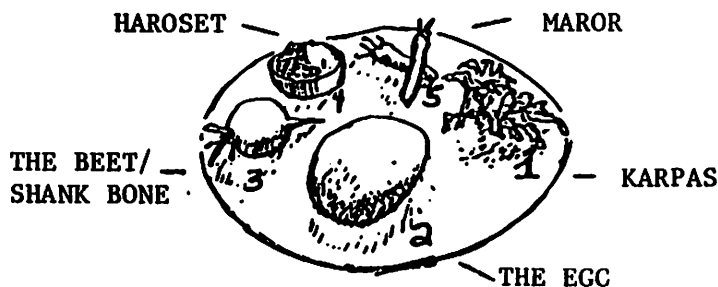
Most processed foods that we eat during the year are not "Kosher for Passover." Sometimes the only difference is that the production of Passover foods is supervised by religious authorities. Proper food will be labeled "Kosher for Passover." If you are unclear about foods for Passover ask a Jewish friend

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\* Sephardic Jews (those of Spanish descent) eat legumes but most Jews in North America follow the Ashkenasic (Eastern European) customs.

## Preparation

This is a pot luck meal. Invite participants to bring their favorite food for the meal and food and clothing for a nearby women's shelter. Gather a Seder plate for each table. Place on each table the Seder plate, a plate with three matzahs, a cup of salt water, a cup of wine for the prophets Miriam and Elijah, two candles, carafes of wine and juice, a bowl, pitcher of water and a towel. Your table should be festive and elegant. Set the tables with a place setting for each person.



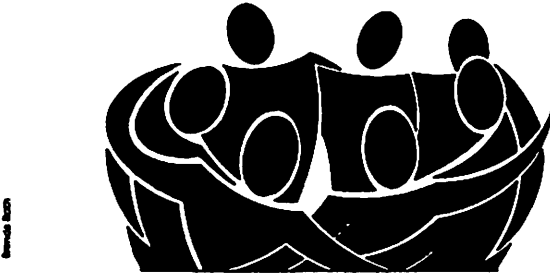
Provide a copy of this service for each participant. Ordinarily we do not suggest this, but this service is long and detailed and people will want their own copy. PLEASE DO NOT XEROX this copy as it is copyrighted.

Enlist leaders for each of the sections in the service. You will need leaders for the twenty eight parts of the service, as well as readers. The questions are best asked by children.

**NOTE:** The Seder service will last for about one hour before the meal is served. You may want to have an *hors d'oeuvre* table ready as guests arrive so that no one will be distracted by hunger.

## **Introductions**

Begin the liturgy by introducing yourselves and saying why you have come. Spend a few moments going around the circle (or tables if the group is large), letting each person tell her/his name and why she/he has come.



## **Music Practice and Instructions**

The musicians practice the songs with the group. The facilitator gives instructions that your group will need to be comfortable with the celebration.

## **Welcome**

Welcome to our Holy Thursday/Passover celebration: "Mirjam's Sisters Rejoice." Tonight is Holy Thursday in the Western Christian calendar; Passover begins on the 14th of *Nisan*, the first month of Spring, in the Jewish calendar.

Tonight we gather to reclaim the Jewish and Christian symbols of these two festivals from a feminist perspective. We call on our sister Miriam, a prophet of the Jewish people, to inspire us in this reclaiming.

In the Bible we read that Miriam sang a song when the Jewish people crossed the sea, but the words of her song are not recorded. It is up to us to sing Miriam's song of freedom -- and indeed, we must write it anew and sing it afresh each time we gather as free women and as people seeking justice. Welcome to the singing of Miriam's Song.

## **Jewish Introduction**

*Ha-lahma-anya...* "Let all who are hungry come and eat; let all who are in need come share our Passover".\* Welcome to our Passover *Seder*. Passover celebrates the Exodus of the Jewish people from Egypt. It falls on the first full moon of the spring, the 14th of the month of *Nisan*, thus it is called *hag ha aviv*, the holiday of the spring. It is also known as the season of our liberation - *zman herutanu*.

## 6 Miriam's Sisters Rejoice: WATER

The main themes of Passover, slavery and liberation, are themes that transcend time, gender and religion. We are here to reflect on our past, share stories of the present, and work toward a better future together.

*Seder* (sāy'-der) means order and this meal is carefully organized so that we experience slavery and freedom through rituals. We are reading from the *haggadah* (ha-ga'-dah, the script of the celebration) which means "telling". Tonight we will retell the story of the Exodus.

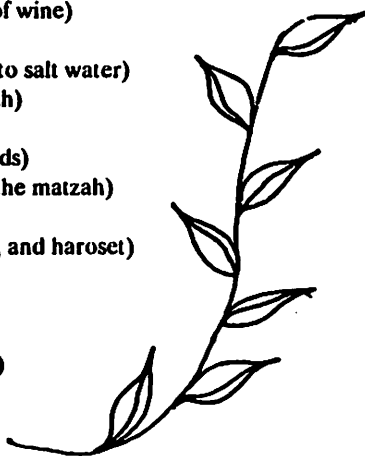
On each table is a seder plate containing 5 symbols of Passover. As we mention each one, a different woman at each table will lift it up.

1. *Z'roah* (beet, for vegetarian seders, or shankbone of lamb or chicken) - symbolizes the Passover offering;
2. *Karpas* (greens such as parsley, onion greens or celery) - represents springtime renewal and awakening;
3. *Maror* (bitter herbs, usually horseradish) - reminds us of the embittered lives of slaves;
4. *Haroset* (Ashkenasic Jews use a mixture of apples, nuts, wine and cinnamon. Sephardic Jews often add dates, figs, raisins and oranges) - represents the mortar used in making bricks.
5. *Baytzah* (hard boiled and roasted egg) - symbolizes springtime fertility. The roundness of the egg mirrors the cycle of life to death to life.

In addition to the seder plate, each table has a plate with three matzahs, a cup of salt water, a cup of wine for the prophets Miriam and Elijah, 2 candles, juice and wine.

We begin the *Seder* by singing the *Seder* (order) song and we will sing it before each new part of the service.

- Kadesh* (blessing over the first cup of wine)
- Urchatz* (first washing of hands)
- Karpas* (dipping green vegetables into salt water)
- Yachatz* (breaking the middle matzah)
- Magid* (telling the story)
- Rachatz* (second washing of the hands)
- Motzi matzah* (blessing over eating the matzah)
- Maror* (eating the bitter herbs)
- Korech* (sandwich of matzah, maror, and haroset)
- Shulchan Orech* (eating the meal)
- Tzafoon* (eating the afikomen)
- Barech* (grace after meals)
- Hallel* (reciting the psalms of praise)
- Nirtzah* (closing portion of *Seder*)



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\*This saying is from the Aramaic language of the Jews in the early C.E. (Common Era) inviting all who are hungry, figuratively and literally, to join the *seder*.

## Christian Introduction

We come together this Holy Thursday as women, children and men to claim our roots as people who have been promised freedom by our God. Our story looks back to the journey to freedom made by Miriam and Moses. It looks back to the way Jesus claimed that same story and transformed it in his ministry. And we look ahead to the day when women will be free, when the "discipleship of equals" will be celebrated anew in the fullness of freedom.

This night is special, for tonight we seek to make whole our images of the Last Supper, to see not only men but women and children at the seder table with Jesus. At the *Seder* we remember how God heard the cries of the Jewish people and acted on their behalf. In the ministry of Jesus we recall how God once again heard the cries of the oppressed and acted through Jesus to touch them with a human hand.

This night is special, for the cup and the bread, which are so sacred to Christians, are lifted and blessed by women. The songs we sing about freedom's journey are women's songs. The memories of struggle we tell are women's stories. For too long we have been kept away from blessing, we have been told not to make the journey, we have been promised failure in our struggles.

*Basta ! Nunca mas !* No more. We were brought out of bondage, we kept faith with Jesus. Our place is here, and our night has come. Let our prayers and our feast begin.



Song: "Woke Up This Mornin'," Traditional Spiritual

Woke up this mornin' with my mind stayed on freedom (3x)  
Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah

Comin' to the *Seder* with my mind stayed on freedom....  
Askin' four questions with my mind stayed on freedom....  
Miriam's sisters have our minds stayed on freedom....  
Lightin' the candles with our minds stayed on freedom...

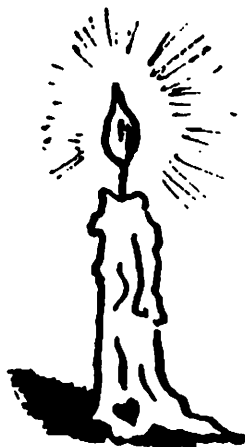


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### Kindling the Lights

Jewish holidays are ushered in with the kindling of lights and many Christian celebrations begin by lighting candles as well. As we light the candles tonight, let us remember our place in history.

We are the generation  
That stands between the fires.  
Behind us is the flame and smoke  
That rose from Auschwitz and from Hiroshima.  
Before us is the nightmare of a Flood of Fire:  
A thermonuclear holocaust  
That could make every human city  
A crematorium without a chimney.  
It is our task to make from fire  
Not an all-consuming blaze  
But the light in which we see each other;  
All of us different,  
Yet sharing a common humanity.  
We light this fire to see more clearly  
That the earth, the human race, is not for burning.  
We light this fire to see more clearly  
The rainbow in our many-colored faces.



*One person at each table lights the candles. (Lights are dimmed.)*

To insure that the lights remain a part of our *Seder* journey long after the candles burn away, we cup our hands over the flame and draw the heat towards our eyes three times as we recite:

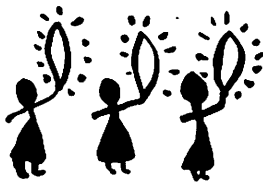
בְּרוּכָה זֶה שְׁכִינָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְלַכָּה הָעוֹלָם  
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁתָנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיהָ וְצִוָּתָנוּ לְהַדְלִיק  
נֵר שֶׁל (טָבָה וְ) יוֹם טוֹב.

*Brukha Yah Shekhinah, Elohaynu Malkat ha'olam, asher kid shatnu  
b'mitzvotayha vetzevatnu l'hadlik ner shel Yom Tov.\**

**ALL:** Blessed is the light that guides us on the road toward freedom. With joy we kindle the festival lights and begin our celebration of Passover.

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\*The blessing for each part of the *Seder* is given first in a Hebrew form which can be read by one or more persons, then all present are invited to join in the English form of the blessing.





## Miriam's Sisters Rejoice: WATER 9

Song: Order of the Seder

Kadesh קִדֵּשׁ

(ka-desh', blessing over the first cup)



*Pour wine or juice into your glasses.*

Tonight we drink four cups of the fruit of the vine. There are many explanations for this custom. They represent, some have said, the four corners of the earth, for freedom must live everywhere; the four seasons of the year, for freedom's cycle must be forever; the four matriarchs: Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel, for freedom must be women's song.

Above all they represent the four-fold promise of redemption which God pledged to Israel: "I will bring you out - I will deliver you- I will redeem you- I will take you to be my people." (Exodus 6:6-7)

This first cup is dedicated to Miriam, our sister and prophet who took a timbrel in her hand and led the women into the Promised Land. The Song of Miriam has been lost, or written out of history. It is not recorded in the Bible. Tonight we recreate her Song as we raise our first glass rejoicing as Miriam's sisters (and brothers).

In the spirit of Miriam we bless this first cup.

בְּרוּכָה יְיָ שְׁכִינָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְלַכָּה הַעוֹלָם  
בּוֹרְאֵת פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן.

*Brukha Yah Shekhinah, Elohaynu Malkat ha'olam, borayt p'ri hagafen.*

**ALL:** Blessed are you, Shechinah, Holy One, All in all, who brings forth from the earth the fruit of the vine. It is a sign of rejoicing. We raise our glasses and toast our sister Miriam tonight. Following her, we promise to dance our sisters and brothers and their children into the promised land.

*Drink the first cup of wine and juice.*



Song: Order of the Seder

Urchatz וּרְחַצ

(ur-hatz', washing of hands)

We wash our hands to prepare ourselves for this meal. We wash away all that keeps us from being truly ourselves. We prepare ourselves for newness and refreshment. Before we wash our hands we listen to the words of Erika Schnaackenberg, age 10. She wrote:

# 10 Miriam's Sisters Rejoice: WATER

Women are like waterfalls  
flowing, stroking, stretching, knowing

Women are like rainbows  
Splashing, dancing, crying, laughing

Women are like women  
caring about each other  
knowing one another

Women are like waterfalls  
flowing, stroking, stretching, knowing

*from Songs of Struggles, Dreams of Rainbows Forst and Rever*  
**PUBLISH-HER Press, P.O. Box 2653 Seattle WA 98111**



Let us as Jewish and Christian women, children and men together, wash one another's hands.

*Pass around the bowl, pitcher of water and towel and wash and dry one another's hands, singing.*

Song: "Waterfall" by Cris Williamson

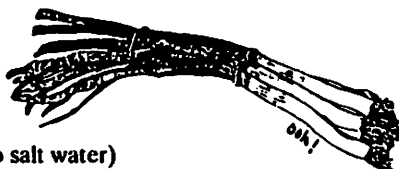
Filling up and spilling over it's an endless waterfall  
Filling up and spilling over, over all (2x - hum - 2x)

*©copyright 1975 Bird Ankles Music. All rights reserved. Used by permission.*

Song: Order of the Seder

Karpas

(kar-pas', dipping the green vegetables into salt water)



We dip the greens of spring into salt water to celebrate the renewal of the earth's life in this season. Salt water represents the tears of suffering we shed as slaves, the sweat of our brows from our labor, and the waters of our wombs in which we carried our children.

It symbolizes the tears we shed for our oppression as women, especially those who are doubly oppressed among us who are black, Hispanic, lesbian, divorced, battered, sexually abused and harassed... We celebrate the struggle to break from pain, to grow and bloom as free women.

ברוכה יה שכינה אלקינו מלכת העולם  
בוראת פרי האדמה.

*Brukha Yah Shekhinah, Elohaynu Malkat ha'olam, borayt p'ri ha'adamah.*

**ALL:** Blessed are you, our Source, Provider of the Universe who calls forth life from the earth. As these green plants symbolize Spring, they are signs of hope in our struggle for liberation. May we be strengthened to grow strong and hardy as we overcome oppression.

*Take some green vegetables. Dip them into salt water and eat.*

**Song:** Order of the Seder

**Yachatz** יָחַץ  
(*Ya-hatz'*, breaking the middle matzah)



The middle matzah, called the *afikomen* (*ah-fee-kō'-men*), is broken in half. The broken matzah reminds us of our oppressed sisters and brothers in distant lands of Ethiopia, the Middle East and the Soviet Union. Even if they are free to attend *Seder*s, they are not able to sing honestly about their own freedom since they are held captive in their own countries.

Listen now to the words of Alice Walker whose poem reminds us of the broken matzah, the broken women, the twin sides of justice and hope that we need for liberation.

**REMEMBER?** Alice Walker

Remember me?  
I am the girl  
with the dark skin  
whose shoes are thin  
with rotted teeth.  
I am the dark  
rotten-toothed girl  
with the wounded eye  
and the melted ear.

I am the girl  
holding their babies  
cooking their meals  
sweeping their yards  
washing their clothes.  
Dark and rotting  
and wounded, wounded.

I would give  
to the human race  
only hope.

I am the woman  
with the blessed  
dark skin  
I am the woman  
with the healing eye  
the ear that hears.

I am the woman: Dark  
repaired, healed  
listening to you.

I would give  
to the human race  
only hope.

I am the woman  
offering two flowers  
whose roots  
are twin:

Justice and Hope

Let us begin.



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(The adults secretly hide half of the broken matzah which will be found by the children when the meal is finished.)

Song: Order of the Seder

Magid מַגִּיד

(ma-geed', telling the story)



One woman from each table holds up a piece of matzah.

This matzah - *lechem oni* - poor people's bread - is like a tortilla.

Hard, flat, bland, it does not delight the palate yet the belly gives thanks.

This matzah - *lechem oni* - is like chapati.

Impervious to mold and rot even in the heat of the desert, it is compact and easily carried as our foremothers did during the hurried Exodus from Egypt.

This matzah - *lechem oni* - is like johnnycake.

Kneaded and flattened then shoved into the oven for a brief baking with no luxury of time allowed for leavening.

This matzah - *lechem oni* - is our journey bread.

Now let all who pursue freedom come and eat, all who are hungry or in need come and join the Passover meal. This year we are slaves. Next year we will be free women.

Eat this unleavened bread.



Four Questions

These questions provide an opportunity to explain the meaning of the service in detail. We are told that the youngest children ask the questions so that the explanation will be simple enough for even the youngest to understand.

Now we begin to tell the story of the Passover. We begin with asking the traditional four questions. In answering these questions, we join all others who seek to learn for tomorrow by studying the lessons from the past.

*The questions are asked by four different children and answered by four different mothers.*

1. Mother, why is this night different from all other nights? Why do we celebrate?



**Seder telling the stories of women?**

**Response:** This night is different because people gather to hold life in its contradictions -

the bitter and the sweet  
the death and resurrection  
the struggle and the victory  
the reality of war and the desperate efforts for peace.

We do this as women with our friends for, as Miriam's sisters, we believe that only by empowering women can we make every night like this night -- a time for celebration and enjoyment, for reflection and letting go. We set this night aside as a foretaste of our unity to come.

**2. Mother, why do we taste this bitterness and keep it fresh in our mouths?**

**Response:** Life is bitter at times, there is evil in the world. Look to Central America and the Middle East. Think of those who are sick, and those who have died this year. Think of rape and incest, of our own failings (add more as the year's events warrant.) These are bitter realities!!

But there is hope too, and we keep our eyes and our ears and our hearts open to the fresh new life that this season signals. We hold these contradictions together because that is life.

**3. Mother, why do we then taste both salt tears and sweet?**

**Response:** Salt tears and sweet together remind us that just as a friend comforts you when you cry, so too does the world provide you with help. No burden is too heavy for all of us to carry, no command to do justice is too difficult if we as women bond together to do justice. That is why we take the bitter with the sweet, together, knowing that we can carry on.

**4. Mother, why do we find it so difficult to lean back and relax during this meal?**

**Response:** It is fun to sing and eat and party together, but deep in the back of our minds is the news of war on TV, the reality of women's suffering, the destruction of the earth that we love. We try to relax, and we do. But we are always vigilant, on edge, so as to be ready to spring into action for justice.

Responses to all questions by Mary E. Hunt  
spoken to Chris Schussler Fiorenza  
at WATER's first Seder in 1985



## Four Daughters

Four times the Torah bids us tell our children of the Exodus from Egypt. Four times the Torah repeats: "And you shall tell your child on that day...."

The torah also speaks of four children, each coming to the Seder with a different point of view. Tonight four daughters: one wise, one bitter, one simple, and one who does not even know how to ask question their mothers.

Mother, asks the clever daughter,  
who are our mothers?  
Who are our ancestors?  
What is our history?  
Give us our name. Name our genealogy.

Mother, asks the wicked daughter,  
if I learn my history,  
will I not be angry?  
Will I not be bitter as Miriam  
who was deprived of her prophecy?

Mother, asks the simple daughter,  
if Miriam lies buried in the sand,  
why must we dig up those bones?  
Why must we remove her from sun and stone  
where she belongs?

The one who knows not how to question,  
she has no past,  
she can have no present,  
she can have no future  
without knowing her mother,  
without knowing her angers,  
without knowing her questions.

E.M. Broner,  
"The Song of Questions."

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women's seder

**ALL:** Let us all be wise here, and full of questions. Everything in the Seder has meaning. Even if we were full of wisdom, venerable sages all, steeped in Torah, it would still be incumbent upon us to recount the exodus from Egypt and examine each word.

## Telling Stories

We have been asked the questions and now we are obligated to tell the story of our Exodus. Each year tradition recounts the story as Moses leading the "people." But in Jewish history, as in all patriarchy, the story of the "people" has

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been the story of only the "men." From Biblical writings and tradition, we can deduce that the Hebrew women and men left Egypt in two separate groups, one led by Miriam and the other by her younger brother Moses.

Tonight we remember that Miriam led the Jewish people out of Egypt. Miriam gets her name from the Hebrew words *mar* and *mari*. *Mar* means "bitter" - it was a bitter time for our people in Egypt. Tonight, too, we feel bitter for having had the legends and traditions of our mothers hidden from us. *Mari* means "rebellion" - Miriam rebelled against her oppression as a woman as well as a Jew. We follow the rebellious tradition of Miriam as we reclaim our story tonight.

And Miriam the prophetess took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dances.

Song: "Go Down Miriam," traditional Spiritual

When Israel was in Egypt's land, Let my people go.  
Oppressed so hard they could not stand, Let my people go.  
Go down, Miriam, way down in Egypt's land,  
Tell old Pharaoh, to let my people go.

Thus says our God, "I'll lead the way, Let my people go.  
"A fire by night, a cloud by day." Let my people go. (ref)

No more in bondage shall they toil, Let my people go.  
Let them come out with Egypt's spoil, Let my people go.

Our God told Miriam what to do, Let my people go.  
To dance the children of Israel through, Let my people go.

When they had reached the other shore, Let my people go.  
They sang the song of triumph o'er, Let my people go.

Oh, let us all from bondage flee, Let my people go.  
And let us all in God be free, Let my people go.

The Ten Plagues



God struck the Egyptians with ten plagues to accomplish the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. The patriarchy strikes women with plagues to enslave us. At the mention of each plague, we dip our little finger into our cup and drop a bit of drink onto our plates, diminishing our joy.

Only when these plagues cease to afflict women will our cup be full and our happiness be complete. Only when these plagues cease to afflict women will society's cup be full.  
Let us recite the plagues together since they belong to all of us.

1. **RACISM:** We are plagued because racism divides the human family. We fail to





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honor both the sacred differences among ourselves, and the common struggle in which we engage.

Until women share our resources for the liberation of all women, everyone will be bound.

**2. HATRED OF JEWS:** We are plagued when the term "Jewish American Princess" (JAP) is used to put-down Jewish women because it is a form of anti-semitism.

Until women give up the use and acceptance of stereotypes, all people will be limited by them.

**3. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:** We are plagued because we are survivors of violence against women: rape, incest, battering.

Until women are safe from violence, everyone's life is in danger.

**4. AIDS:** We are plagued by AIDS because our families, friends, children and our neighbors are living with AIDS. Both the suffering caused by the disease and the violent fear of AIDS limits the human family.

Until all are freed from the threat of AIDS, no one will be free from fear of AIDS.

**5. ADDICTIONS:** We are plagued by addictions to nicotine, alcohol, chemicals, caffeine, food, prescription drugs because society sends us the message that we should be someone other than who we are. And we seek to escape from the realities of our lives.

Until we are comfortable with ourselves, our society will be enslaved by these addictions.

**6. HOMOPHOBIA:** We are plagued by homophobia because many lesbian women and gay men remain invisible from fear of losing their jobs, families, friends, everything in being ostracized by society.

Until the sexual orientation of every person is honored, the integrity of all relationships is lessened.

**7. RELIGIOUS LAWS:** We are plagued by oppressive religious laws and the exclusion of women from full participation in both Jewish and Christian traditions.

Until patriarchal religions are transformed, faith is interpreted by only a few and the fullness of God is concealed.

**8. AGEISM:** We are plagued by ageism because society tells us that neither older women nor younger women have any significant contributions to make to our world.

Until the wisdom of people of all ages is recognized, we will not be able to learn from one another.

**9. DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE DIFFERENTLY-ABLED:** We are plagued by discrimination against the differently-abled because a false sense of human wholeness prevents us from seeing all people as an image of God.

Until discrimination against the differently-abled is eliminated, our definition of wholeness will be incomplete.

Miriam's Sisters Rejoice: WATER 17

10. **ECONOMICS:** We are plagued by women's unequal opportunities for work choice and by unequal pay scales for women workers who are neither paid as much as male counterparts nor promoted as readily to executive, decision-making positions.

Until women have access to money and the freedom to choose to work in or outside of the home, privilege remains in the hands of a few.

*Slightly lift the second cup of wine (but do not drink) and say:*

**ALL:** From these plagues upon our lives, we seek redemption.

**Song:** "It Could Have Been Me" by Holly Near



It could have been me but instead it was you,  
So I'll keep doing the work you were doing as if I were two,  
I'll be a student of life, a singer of songs, a farmer of food and a righter of

It could have been me but instead it was you,  
And it may be me dear sisters and brothers before we are through,  
But if you can work\* (sing, die, live) for freedom, freedom, freedom,  
**freedom**

If you can work\* (sing, die, live) for freedom I can too.

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permission of Redwood Records.

**Dayenu** (*dī-ā-nū*)... It would have been enough



In a traditional *haggadah*, we express our thankfulness for all that was done for the Jewish people from the time we fled Egypt until the temple was built in Israel. In the song *Dayenu*, the claim is made that any one of these mighty acts would have been "enough for us."

But no one act would have ensured all freedom, just as no individual movement for freedom today will make all women free. Rather, we sing *Dayenu* because we know that we move to freedom one step at a time. Each step is complete and essential; we celebrate each step and then start out on the next step. We cannot refuse any one step because it is not the whole journey to freedom, or we will never arrive at the end. We must sing each chorus of the *Dayenu* as if it were the whole song - and then acknowledge and reclaim every verse as we journey on to complete liberation.

We remember the rich history of women from whose lives we now reap our own freedom.

Let us name those who came before us, adding the names of those not included in this list.

Had she given us our foremothers, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah and not our prophets, it would have been enough.

# 18 Miriam's Sisters Rejoice: WATER

**SONG: *Dayenu!***

Had she given us the prophets, Miriam, Deborah, Hannah and Huldah, and not our women of faith..

Had she given us our women of faith, Esther, Ruth, Naomi, Mary, Elizabeth, Lydia, Prisca, and not our poets...

Had she given us our poets, Adrienne Rich, Gwendolyn Brooks, Ellen Bass, Marge Piercy, Julia Esquivel, and not our feminist leaders...

Had she given us our feminist leaders Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, Florence Kennedy, Charlotte Bunch and not our feminist theologians...

**SONG: *Dayenu!***



Had she given us our feminist theologians, Mary Daly, Mary Hunt, Judith Plaskow, Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, Rosemary Radford Ruether, Dolores Williams, Elsa Tamez, Betzie Hollants, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Catharina Halkes, Anne Bennett, Nelle Morton, and not our feminist ministers and rabbis...

Had she given us our feminist ministers and rabbis, Pauli Murray, Theresa Kane, Marjorie Matthews, Jeanne Audrey Powers, Mary B. Lynch, Betty Carroll, Margie Tuite, Lynn Gottlieb, Sally Priesand, and not our artists...

Had she given us our artists, Judy Chicago, Georgia O'Keefe, Corita Kent, Kaehe Kollwitz, and not our musicians...

Had she given us our musicians, Holly Near, Violetta Parra, Chris Williamson, Mercedes Sosa, Maria Elena Walsh, Joan Baez, Sweet Honey in the Rock, Carolyn McDade and Marsie Silvestro and not our writers...

**SONG: *Dayenu!***



Had she given us our writers, Virginia Woolf, Simone de Beauvoir, May Sarton, Audre Lourde, E.M. Broner, Tillie Olson, Alice Walker, Grace Paley, Gertrude Stein, Mary Helen Washington, Rita Mae Brown, Toni Morrison, Gloria Naylor, and not our freedom fighters...

Had she given us our freedom fighters, Harriette Tubman, Mother Jones, Nora Astorga, and not our political leaders...

Had she given us our political leaders, Emma Goldman, Sojourner Truth, Geraldine Ferraro, Barbara Jordan, Barbara Mikulski, Shirley Chisholm and not the women in our lives...

And who are the women who have inspired us, supported us, refreshed us with their inspiration and care? Let us share their names at our table.

Share names of women with one another.

SONG: *Dayenu!*

Second Cup

*Pour wine or juice into your glasses.*



We now raise the second cup in praise of the community of women.

בְּרוּכָה זֶה שְׂכִינָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מַלְכָּה הָעוֹלָם

בּוֹרְאֵת פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן

*Brukha Yah Shekhinah, Elohaynu Malkat ha'olam, borayt p'ri hagafen.*

**ALL:** Blessed are you, Spirit of Life, for you have given us women: mothers, sisters, lovers, children, friends, who challenge us to freedom. Blessed be all women.

*Drink the second cup of wine and juice.*

Song: Order of the Seder

Rachatz רַחֵץ

(*ra-hatz'*, second washing of hands)



We wash our hands before blessing and eating the matzah. We begin to focus on this holy ritual by cleansing ourselves with water. As we pass the bowl of water around one last time, let us do so in silence so that we may listen to our inner wisdom. We reclaim our healing powers and remember that our bodies are holy.

בְּרוּכָה זֶה שְׂכִינָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מַלְכָּה הָעוֹלָם

אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁתָנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיהָ וְצִוָּתָנוּ עַל נְטִילַת יְדַיִם

*Brukha Yah Shekhinah, Elohaynu Malkat ha'olam, asher kid shatnu b'mitzvotayhu v'tzi vatnu al n'tilat yadayim.*

**ALL:** Blessed are you, Everflowing Waterfall, who cleanses our hands and hearts to usher in the age of wisdom and peace.

*Pass around the water and wash one another's hands.*

Song: Order of the Seder

Motzi Matzah מוֹצֵי מַצָּה

(*mō-tzee' ma-tzah'*, blessing over eating the matzah)

We begin this shared meal as we begin all shared meals: by breaking bread together. Because this is the feast of unleavened bread, tonight we break matzah together.

## 20 Miriam's Sisters Rejoice: WATER

Break the upper matzah and the remainder of the middle matzah into smaller pieces and give each person a piece.

בְּרוּכָה זֶה שְׂכִינָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְלַכַת הָעוֹלָם  
הַמוֹצִיָּאָה לָחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

*Brukha Yah Shekhinah, Elohaynu Malkat ha'olam,  
hamotzeeya lekhem meen ha'aretz.*

**ALL:** Blessed are you, Spirit of Nourishment, who brings forth bread from the earth.

Blessed are you, Spirit of Life, who has sanctified us through your commandments and instructed us to eat unleavened bread.

*Eat this unleavened bread.*

Song: Order of the Seder

Maror מָרֹר  
(*ma-ror*', eating the bitter herbs)



The *maror*, or bitter herbs, stings our mouths as a reminder of the pain of slavery. While we are commanded to eat the bitter *maror*, that obligation is sweetened by the requirement to dip the *maror* into *haroset*. May the two tastes together remind us of the twin realities of our lives: pain and joy. Our enslavement is painful, our liberation brings joy. As women we are not yet free from pain, but we can find joy in our common struggle.

בְּרוּכָה זֶה שְׂכִינָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְלַכַת הָעוֹלָם  
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיהָ וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מָרֹר.

*Brukha Yah Shekhinah, Elohaynu Malkat ha'olam, asher kid shatnu  
b'mitzvotayha, v'tzi vatnu al akhilat maror.*

**ALL:** Blessed are you Shechinah, Creator of the Universe, who has sanctified us through your commandments and instructed us to eat maror. The maror we eat now is the symbol of pain in women's lives. May it remind us of the burning suffering of women all over the world, and inspire us to enable all who seek the sweetness of liberation to taste its joys.

*Eat maror dipped in haroset.*

Song: Order of the Seder

Korech כּוֹרֵךְ  
(*kō-rech*', sandwich of matzah, *maror* and *haroset*)

Two thousand years ago, Rabbi Hillel invented the "Hillel sandwich" by putting the *maror* and *haroset* together between two pieces of matzah. The *maror*

reminds us of the bitterness of slavery and the *haroset* reminds us of the joy of freedom. Eating them together we are reminded of the bittersweet reality that although we may now live freely we have not always and that there are others still enslaved. Hillel taught, "What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow (hu)man. This is the whole Torah; the rest is the commentary thereof. Go and learn it." (Shab. 31A)

*Make a sandwich of two small pieces of matzah, maror and haroset and eat the Hillel sandwich.*

Song: Order of the Seder

Schulchan Orech      שֻׁלְחַן עֹרֵךְ  
(shul-han' õ-rech', eating the meal)



We have told our story, we have blessed our foods. Let us now share in the food we have each prepared for this festive meal.

**EAT THE FESTIVE MEAL!!!!!!**

Song: Order of the Seder

Tzafoon      צִפּוֹן  
(tza-fün', eating the afikomen)

As the last part of the meal, we must now find the *afikomen*. We ask the children to find the *afikomen* that was hidden by the adults at the beginning of the Seder. So children, start the search!

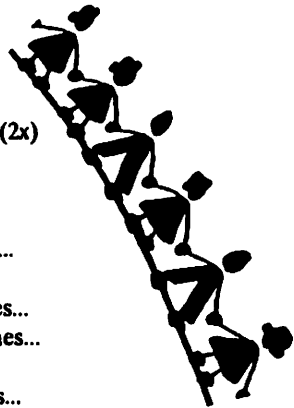
*Once the children have the afikomen in their hands, the adults bargain with them to get it back so that the Seder can continue.*

*Sing as the children search.*

Song: "Afikomen 'Round the Mountain," a folk song

*Afikomen round the mountain when she comes (2x)*  
*Afikomen round the mountain (2x)*  
*Afikomen round the mountain when she comes.*

She'll be eatin' 6 stale matzahs when she comes...  
She'll be eatin' 5 knishes when she comes...  
She'll be drinkin' 4 more glasses when she comes...  
She'll be chompin' 3 green vegies when she comes...  
She'll be resting on 2 pillows when she comes...  
She'll bring home the *afikomen* when she comes...



Song: Order of the Seder

## 22 Miriam's Sisters Rejoice: WATER

Barech בָּרַךְ

(*ba-rech'*, grace after the meal)

This blessing, adapted from the Divine Praises, is prayed as an echo to the leader.

Blessed be God. (echo: Blessed be God)

Blessed be her holy name. (echo)

Blessed be her sisters gathered this evening in praise and celebration.  
(echo)

Blessed be all children who tell the stories of their foremothers. (echo)

Blessed be all men who work to overcome patriarchy. (echo)

Blessed be all those who die this day. (echo)

Blessed be God in her earth and in her universe. (echo)

Blessed are we as we continue dancing to liberation. (echo)

### Third Cup

*Pour wine or juice into your glasses.*



Let us bless the third cup as the cup of liberation. The story of Exodus challenges us to liberate ourselves from injustice. Our story connects us with all of humanity. We know that no person is truly free until all people are free. The third cup celebrates our vision of a fully liberated world and our solidarity with all who work for liberation.

בְּרוּכָה יְהוָה שְׁכִינָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מַלְכַּת הָעוֹלָם  
בּוֹרְאָה פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן

*Brukha Yah Shekhinah, Elohaynu Malkat ha'olam, bo'rayt p'ri hagafen.*

**ALL:** Blessed are you, Nurturer, who creates the fruit of the vine and shows us the way to liberation.

*Drink the third cup of wine and juice.*



### Cup of Miriam / Opening the Door

It is said that Miriam visits every *Seder* whose women are full participants. We await with anticipation her arrival as one awaits any courageous person who undertakes the responsibility of leadership when it is needed.

Alongside of Miriam, Elijah arrives in times of trouble. In legends he appears mystically to lift dampened spirits and plant hope in the hearts of the overburdened.

We open the door as a sign of hospitality and friendliness. May the prophets Miriam and Elijah enter here inspiring us to continue our work to build a world in which justice and freedom shall be the inheritance of all.

Song: "L'Mir'yam Ha N'Viah" (To Miriam the Prophet)



*L'Mir'yam ha n'viah, L'Mir'yam ha n'viah,  
Ul' achoteinu Sara v' Rivka (Rachel v'Leia, Rut u'Dvora)  
Anu notnot b'raach.*

To Miriam the Prophet  
And to our sisters:  
Sarah and Rebecca (Rachel and Leah, Ruth and Deborah)  
We offer a blessing.

Song: Order of the Seder

Hallel הלל  
(ha-lel', psalms of praise)



Praise our choices, sisters, for each doorway  
open to us was taken by squads of fighting  
women who paid years of trouble and struggle,  
who paid their wombs, their sleep, their lives  
that we might walk through these gates upright.  
Doorways are sacred to women for we  
are the doorways of life and we must choose  
what comes in and what goes out. Freedom  
is our real abundance.

Marge Piercy, "Sabbath of Mutual Respect,"  
The Moon is Always Female.

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the author.

Fourth Cup

*Pour wine or juice into your glasses.*



We now raise the fourth cup to children. They are the fruit of our wombs.  
They will continue to pass on the stories of liberation.

בְּרוּכָה יְהוָה שְׁכִינָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מַלְכַּת הָעוֹלָם  
בּוֹרְאֵת בְּרִי הַגִּפֹּן.

*Brukha Yah Shekhinah, Elohaynu Malkat ha'olam, borayt p'ri hagafen.*

**ALL:** Blessed are you, Spirit of Empowerment, for you have given us the next  
generation that freedom may endure.

*Drink the fourth cup of wine or juice.*

Song: Order of the Seder

## 24 Miriam's Sisters Rejoice: WATER

Nirtzah נִרְצָה

(nēr-tzah', closing portion of the Seder)

We now bring our Passover Seder to an end. Next year, may we celebrate our Seder in a world which knows *Shalom*, a world made whole through equality and blessed by freedom for all women.

**ALL:** We have done as Miriam and her sisters have done.

We have learned the traditions.

We have re-lived them in our tears and laughter.

We have crossed dry-shod through the waters.

We have sung the song of Miriam.

We have made real the words of the *haggadah*, "All must see themselves as if they personally had left Egypt."

When we do this, we forge links that only our own hands can make.

This year we still wander.

Next year may we have come home to the Land of Freedom!

Song: "Oh Freedom," Traditional Spiritual

Oh Freedom, Oh freedom, Oh freedom over me  
An' before I be a slave, I'll be buried in my grave,  
An' go home to my God an' be free.

There'll be singin'...  
There'll be dancin'...  
There'll be prayin'...  
There'll be laughin'...



## Appendix I: Recipes

### *Haroset*

from *The Settlement Cookbook*, circa 1945

Pare and chop a few apples.

Add honey, cinnamon, pounded walnuts, grated lemon rind.

Mix thoroughly.

Add wine or grape juice to bind in a paste like consistency.

### **L. Bain's Adaptation of Grandmother's *Haroset***

from *The New York Times Magazine*

March 27, 1988

1/2 pound walnuts

1/4 pound dried apricots

1/4 pound dried pitted prunes

1/4 pound pitted dates

3 whole apples, peeled, cored and quartered

1 large unpeeled seedless orange, quartered

1/2 cup kosher sweet red wine

1/8 cup kosher Passover brandy

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

1/8 teaspoon ground cloves

1/8 teaspoon nutmeg

1 tablespoon lime juice

2 tablespoons matzah meal, or as needed.

1. Using the steel blade of a food processor or other chopper, chop very fine, but not to a paste, the walnuts, apricots, prunes, dates, apples and orange. This may be done in batches, if necessary.

2. Add the wine, brandy, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg and lime juice. If necessary, add matzah meal to make a mortarlike consistency.

**Yield:** Six cups.

**Note:** Any leftover haroset makes a wonderful chicken stuffing, or a marvelous fruit topping.

**Seder Soup with Matzo Kleis  
(Matzah Ball Soup)  
from Jewish Vegetarian Cooking  
by Rose Freidman**

1 large ripe tomato, skinned  
2 carrots  
1 small onion  
2 leeks  
2 stalks celery  
1 small parsnip  
1 small potato  
1 1/2 tablespoon chopped parsley  
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper  
1 vegetable stock cube (optional)

1. Wash and prepare the vegetables. Cut into small pieces.
2. Simmer the vegetables in 10-12 cups of water for approximately 1-1 1/2 hours.
3. Add parsley, seasonings and a vegetable stock cube if desired.
4. Serve with Kneidlach. (see next recipe).

***Kneidlach (Matzah Balls)***  
**from Jewish Vegetarian Cooking**  
**by Rose Freidman**

2 eggs  
 2 tablespoons corn oil  
 Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper  
 2 teaspoons powdered cinnamon  
 Matzo meal

1. Beat the eggs very well until light and frothy.
2. Add 1/2 cup of water and the oil and beat well again.
3. Add the seasonings and gradually add the matzo meal to form a soft batter about the consistency of oatmeal.
4. Place in the refrigerator for about 1 hour.
5. Have a large pot of boiling, salted water on the stove and form the kneidlach mixture into small balls. Drop the balls into boiling water. Boil for about 20 minutes. Allow plenty of room for expansion as they almost double in size. Traditionally served in clear soup.

**Patty Unterman's Potato *Kugelettes***  
**from The New York Times Magazine**  
**March 27, 1988**

1 cup grated and drained Kennebec or Idaho potatoes  
 1/4 cup grated onion  
 2 eggs, well beaten  
 1 teaspoon coarse kosher salt  
 Freshly ground pepper to taste  
 2 tablespoons rendered chicken fat, plus fat to grease the muffin tins  
 Matzah meal for dusting muffin tin.

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.
2. Combine all the ingredients.
3. Grease a 24-cup mini-muffin tin with chicken fat and dust with matzah meal. Place one tablespoon of filling per muffin cup and bake for 25 minutes, until golden.

**Yield:** Twenty-four potato *kugelettes*, for six servings.

**Note:** If no meat is being served at the meal, you can substitute two tablespoons of melted butter for chicken fat.

## Appendix II: Music

Songs used during "Miriam's Sisters Rejoice" are listed here in the order in which they are used in the service.

### Seder Order Song

Ka-deah .u- re-chaiz ker-pus ya - chaiz na-  
 gid ra - chaiz mo-tai ma - taah na-  
 nor ko - rech shul-chaiz rech tea-  
 foon ha - rech ha - lat nir - taah

# "Woke Up This Mornin'"

## Traditional Spiritual

Words adapted by Diann Neu and Tobie Hoffman

**1. Oh, I woke up dis morn-in' wid mah min', An' it was stayed;**

*Response*

**Stayed on free dom**

**Woke up dis morn - in' widmah min', An' it was stayed,**

**Stayed on free dom**

**Woke up dis morn - in' widmah min', An' it was stayed,**

**Stayed on free dom**

**Hal - le - lu, Hal - le - lu, Hal - le - lu - jah.**

**Hal - le - lu, Hal - le - lu, Hal - le - lu - jah.**

Comin' to the *Seder* with my mind stayed on freedom....  
 Askin' four questions with my mind stayed on freedom....  
 Miriam's sisters have our minds stayed on freedom....  
 Lightin' the candles with our minds stayed on freedom...



**"Waterfall"**  
Cris Williamson

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Cris Williamson. Reprinted by permission.

up and spill-ing o-ver an end-less wa-ter - fall fill-ling

up and spill-ing o-ver o-ver all. Fill - ling

all.

**"Go Down Miriam"**  
Traditional Spiritual

1. When Is-ra-el was in E-gypt's land,  
 2. Thus says our God, "I'll lead the way,"  
 3. No more in bond-age shall they toil, Let my peo-ple  
 4. Their foes shall not be- fore them stand,

Op-pressed so hard they could not stand,  
 go, "A fire by night, a cloud by day," Let my peo-ple  
 Let them come out with E-gypt's spoil,  
 They will come in - to free-dom's land,

*Refrain*  
 go. Go down, Miriam, 'Way down in E-  
 gypt's land, Tell old Pha-rach, To let  
 my peo-ple go.

Our God told Miriam what to do, Let my people go.  
 To dance the children of Israel through, Let my people go.

When they had reached the other shore, Let my people go.  
 They sang the song of triumph o'er, Let my people go.

Oh, let us all from bondage flee, Let my people go.  
 And let us all in God be free, Let my people go.

# "It Could Have Been Me"

## Holly Near

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CHORUS (D) Gm7 (E m 7) Gm7/C (E m 7)

It could have been me \_\_\_\_\_ but in - stead it was you, \_

F (D) Gm7 (E m 7)

So I'll keep do - ing the work \_ you were do -

C7sus (A 7) C7 (A 7)

ing \_ as if I were two, \_ I'll be a

Gm7 (E m 7) Am7 (F# m 7)

stu - dent of life, \_ a sing - er of songs, \_ a far - mer of food and a

Gm7 (E m 7)

right - er of wrong, \_ It could have been me \_\_\_\_\_

Gm7/C (E m 7) F (D)

but in - stead it was you, \_ And it may be me \_

Gm7 (E m 7) C7sus (A 7)

\_ dear sis - ters and bro - there \_ be - fore we are through, \_

C7 (A 7) F (D) Dm (B m)

\_ And if you can work \* for free Gm7 (E m 7)

Gm7 (E m 7)

free - dom, free - dom, free - dom, \_ If you can work \* for free -

Gm7/C (E m 7) F (D)

dom I can \_ too, \_

**"Dayenu"**  
**Traditional Jewish Melody**

The musical score for "Dayenu" is written on two staves. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the chorus, with lyrics "Da - da - yei - nu, da - da - yei - nu, da - da - yei - nu, da -". The second staff contains the melody for the second line of the chorus, with lyrics "yei - nu da - yei - nu da - yei - nu. yei - nu da - yei - nu." The melody is in a simple, traditional Jewish style, using a single key signature and a common time signature. The lyrics are written in a stylized, handwritten font.

(Chorus) Da - da - yei - nu, da - da - yei - nu, da - da - yei - nu, da -

1. 2. 3.

yei - nu da - yei - nu da - yei - nu. yei - nu da - yei - nu.

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**"L'Mir'Yam Ha N'Viah "**

**Traditional Jewish Melody (Eliyahu Hanavi )**

**Words by Randee Friedman and Rabbi Lenore Bohm**

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**L'MIR'YAM HA N'VIAH**

Words by Randee Friedman  
and Rabbi Lenore Bohm

Music to the tune  
of Eliyahu Hanavi



L'Mi-r'-yam Ha- N'-vi-ah, L'Mi-r'-yam Ha  
N'-vi-ah, Ul'-a-cho-tei-nu Sa-ra v' Riv-ka  
A - nu npt - not b' ra - a - cha

**Alternative verses:**

Ra-chel v'Lei-a...

Es-ter v'Di-na...

Shif-ra v'Pu-a...

Rut u'Dvo-ra...

**To Miriam the Prophet**

To Miriam the Prophet

And to our sisters:

Sarah and Rebekah,

Rachel and Leah,

Esther and Dinah,

Shifrah and Puah,

Ruth and Deborah,

We offer a blessing.

March 1988  
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*A Resource from WATER, the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics & Ritual*



water

WATER, the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual, is a feminist educational center which fosters social and ecclesial change by empowering women. WATER is a catalyst for women's religious search and creativity through workshops, publications, liturgies, seminars, retreats and classes designed to promote women as religious and moral agents.

While WATER is a local and grassroots effort, it also participates in national and international networks for justice. Through concrete commitments to women's base communities in Chile, Argentina and Uruguay, WATER helps women find our voices and raise them together with other justice-seeking friends in praise of liberation.

Mary E. Hunt and Diann Neu are WATER's co-founders and co-directors. Our office, in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area, is located at 8035 13th Street, Silver Spring, Maryland, 20910, USA. We can be reached by phone at 301-589-2509 or 301-589-3150.

# MIRIAM'S SISTERS REJOICE

## A HOLY THURSDAY AND PASSOVER FEMINIST SEDER

*Diann Neu, Mindy Shapiro, Barbara A. Cullom, Tobie Hoffman*

"Then Miriam, the prophet, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and dancing." *Exodus 15:20*



"If I can't dance to it, it's not my revolution." *Emma Goldman*